

REMARKS

The application has been amended and is believed to be in condition for allowance.

Previously, claims 1-7 were pending with claim 1 being independent. Certain of the previously-pending claims have been amended. Further, new claims 8-20 have been added. Claims 8 and 18 are independent.

The Official Action objected to the specification for not including antecedent basis for certain recitations found in the claims. The specification has been responsively amended. The specification has also been amended to include section headings.

There are no other formal matters outstanding.

Claim 1 stands rejected as anticipated by HANKINSON et al. 3,572,008.

Claim 7 stands rejected as obvious over HANKINSON et al.; claims 2-3 over HANKINSON et al. in view of POSNER et al. 5,651,887; claim 4 over HANKINSON et al. in view of CARLSON et al. 6,120,685; and claims 5-6 over HANKINSON et al. in view of CLACK et al. 6,051,144.

Original claim 1 has been amended so as to patentably distinguish over HANKINSON et al. Note the recitations of at least one connection passageway for leading liquid-free gas to an analysis instrument via the holder unit. Also see the recitation

that the holder unit is connected to the analysis instrument. Further, see the clarified recitation that the water trap is removably fitted in an external cavity of the holder unit. Lastly, see the recitation that the holder unit is provided with connection devices for accommodating the connection device within the external cavity.

These features are not believed to be disclosed by HANKINSON et al. and therefore that reference is not believed to be anticipatory.

The dependent claims are believed to be allowable at least for depending from an allowable independent claim. Further, as all of the dependent claims are rejected in combination with HANKINSON et al., the obviousness rejections are not believed to be viable.

As to claim 2, although POSNER et al. may disclose quick-fastener connection devices, they are positioned externally to a casing. Thus, the teaching would be to connect a casing to a further component such as a wall connection through the use of quick-fastener connections. There is no teaching in this reference that the connection device of the tank would be a quick-fastener device for connection to a passageway of the holder. Any teaching of POSNER et al. needs to be applied to the actual structure of HANKINSON et al. See that the HANKINSON et al. water trap is internal to a overall container 200. There is

nothing in the teaching of POSNER et al. that would suggest using quick-fastener devices for internal connections between the inside tank of HANKINSON et al. and the external holding tank 200.

As to claim 4, CARLSON et al. do not include the elements offered by the Official Action. Applicants have carefully studied this reference and cannot find the electric/electrical contact elements 278 of 268 or 269. In view of this, it appears clear that CARLSON et al. do not teach the missing features recited by the claim.

Claim 5 has been amended to depend from claim 4. Claim 5 has further been amended to recite that the second electrical contact element functions to detect the type of water trap and to adjust the speed of a pump motor of the analysis instrument. This amended recitation is believed to be patentable over all the applied references.

Similarly, the newly-added claims are believed to recite the invention in a manner patentable over the prior art.

Having addressed all the formal matters raised by the Official Action and amended the claims so as to patentably recite the present invention, applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of all the pending claims.

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Amdt. dated November 21, 2003  
Reply to Office Action of August 27, 2003  
Docket No. 1515-1006

The present application is believed to be in condition for allowance and an early indication of the same would be appreciated.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

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